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## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING SELF-CARE DURING COVID-19



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### Abstract

COVID-19 is a novel virus that emerged from the discovery of a new coronavirus. People who have been infected with the disease may experience mild to moderate respiratory illness, but they will recover without the need for medical attention. Since the COVID-19 has affected millions of people around the world, social media has been doing much to keep societies informed about personal hygiene and public Movement Control Order (MCO) facts. Via numerous platforms such like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, social media plays a critical role in spreading the news. The study aims to identify the effectiveness of social media in promoting self-care during COVID-19. The study involves 440 respondents from different backgrounds across Malaysia. The data are collected using version 23 of the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). According to the SPSS results, social media has an important effect on encouraging respondents to practise self-care. Therefore, the Ministry of Health should actively be using social media in promoting self-care.

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## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 virus was first discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. Several patients in the outbreak in Wuhan seemingly had a link to a huge seafood and animal marketplace and suggesting animal to person spread. Yet, due to a rising number of patients who reportedly not had the experience of animal markets, it indicates that person to person spread is happening in Wuhan (About COVID-19, 2020).

Individuals that infected with COVID-19 will experience minor to moderate respiratory sickness and recover without demanding special treatment. Furthermore, the elderly including those with serious health problems are more likely to get infections (Abdul Rauf et al., 2012).

As of 2nd April 2020, there are 1,000,829 cases of COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, 51,356 deaths and 210,199 people that had recovered from the pandemic and the highest total of COVID-19 cases is the USA with 235,747 cases, 10,324 people had recovered, and 5,620 deaths recorded according to Coronavirus Cases (2020). As in Malaysia, the COVID-19 pandemic had recorded 3,116 cases, 767 people that had recovered and 50 deaths recorded (Situasi Semasa Pandemik COVID-19 Di Malaysia, 2020). The increase of cases worldwide is steadily growing.

The use of social media to disseminate information to the world is crucial. According to Christensson (2006), social media refers to various means of communication. Examples of social media are Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram, YouTube etc. Meanwhile, the word "social media" refers to the contact networks through which we disseminate news, music, movies, education, and messages, according to What is Media (2020).

During this outbreak of COVID-19, social media plays a vital role in provided news and keep the community updated with the number of crisis, updated the public with things that Government do to make sure the situations are under control. According to Fernandez (2020), the media has been operating effectively to keep communities informed about the COVID-19, which has impacted millions of people around the world. Either traditional media or digital media, the people "behind the scenes" are working hard to provide information. The media always updated the public with information about self-care such as personal hygiene, updated the public with the Movement Control Order that the Government announced. Media comes out with various ways and style in delivering the information because to make sure the public are not bored with the information provided. Also, media ensure the public to aware of the COVID-19 pandemic that happens globally.

## 2. Problem Statement

According to Luqman Arif and Ahmad Suhael (2020), people still refuse to follow and violate the Movement Control Order (MCO) which lead to a total of 828 people were detained by Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM). Due to the increasing number of police taking more stringent action against whoever violates the MCO. Other than that, there are still people that want to "hang out" during the Movement Control Order (MCO) and they were detained by the Police due to violating the provisions of the CPP under Section 186 of the Penal Code (KK) / 7 (1) of the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases 2020 as stated by Norsyazwani (2020).

Other than that, according to Mohd Aliff (2020), Sarawak recorded the highest percentage in adopting preventive measures when the COVID-19 epidemic hit the country but Sabah and Penang had recorded the lowest percentage in practising the prevention practice. These show that the awareness among people in some states in Malaysia are still low during the COVID-19 crisis even though cases keep on increasing.

### **3. Research Questions**

- What is the level of awareness towards self-care through social media?
- What is the relationship between the effectiveness of social media and promoting self-care during COVID-19?

### **4. Purposes of the study**

The research aims are outlined below:

- To identify the level of awareness towards self-care through social media
- To identify the relationship between the effectiveness of social media and promoting self-care during COVID-19.

### **5. Research Methods**

#### **5.1. Research Design**

The findings of a quantitative survey were the subject of this study. An online questionnaire was administered via email on various social media platforms. The study focuses on public response to the effectiveness of social media in promoting self-care and raising awareness about the Movement Control Order during COVID-19. The platform of social media sites is a convenient way to reach the public.

#### **5.2. Sampling Technique**

The research utilised a nonprobability survey method, which is a practical sampling technique. In non-probability sampling, the population could not be well denned (Lavrakas, 2008). Non-probability sampling approaches include purposeful and convenient sampling, as well as quota specimens. The research utilised convenience sampling, with sample population drawn from a wide range of professions, including government and private sector workers, self-employed people, housewives, retirees, students, and the unemployed. A total of 440 people responded to the survey.

#### **5.3. Measurement of study**

The demographic segment consisted of 51 questions. The study's research goals are related to the questionnaire. In the questions, the data is calculated using ordinal, nominal, and scale. The information is entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The questions are right and precise. As a

result, respondents would have an easier time understanding and responding to the questions (Ridzuan et al., 2018).

#### 5.4. Data Analysis

**Table 1.** Cronbach's Alpha

	Pilot Test		Survey	
	N of items	Percentages %	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha
The level of awareness in promoting self-care during COVID-19.	9	100	.756	.818

The findings were analysed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 23 programme. The process of data analysis includes the survey stage, pilot test, and data transfer. The survey or questionnaire consisted of items that are related to the research aims of the report. The first 50 respondents will receive the questionnaire, which will be used to determine the research's reliability. The survey will be continued until all 440 responses have been obtained, and the results will be transferred to SPSS software for review and reporting (Ridzuan et al., 2017). The reliability of the questions is shown in table 01 for the pilot test, where the questions for each segment are mentioned in the table above.

## 6. Findings

### 6.1. Descriptive statistic

**Table 2.** Demographic

Item		Frequency, $\pi$	Percentage %
Sex	Male	162	36.8
	Female	278	63.2
Age	16-25	159	36.1
	26-35	114	25.9
	36-45	95	21.6
	46-55	39	8.9
	56 and above	33	7.5
Race	Malay	425	96.6
	Chinese	2	.5
	Indian	6	1.4
	Others	7	1.6
	SPM	38	8.6
Highest Education Level	STPM/Asasi/Matrikulasi	16	3.6
	Diploma	81	18.4
	Degree	179	40.7
	Master / PhD	126	28.6
Occupation	Student / Unemployed	130	29.5
	Government sector	124	28.2
	Private sector	107	24.3
	Self-employed	38	8.6
	Retired	22	5.0
	Housewife	19	4.3
Household Income	B40 (RM4,360 and less)	214	48.6

	then)	<b>148</b>	<b>33.6</b>
	M40 (RM4361 – RM9,619)	<b>78</b>	<b>17.7</b>
	T20 (RM9,620 and more then)		
<b>Place of Origin</b>	Urban	<b>313</b>	<b>71.1</b>
	Rural	<b>127</b>	<b>28.9</b>
<b>State</b>	• Northern (Perak, Pulau Pinang, Kedah, Perlis)		
	• Central (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya)	<b>83</b>	<b>18.9</b>
	• Southern (Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor)	<b>169</b>	<b>38.4</b>
	• East Coast (Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan)	<b>126</b>	<b>28.6</b>
	• East Malaysia (Sabah, Sarawak, Labuan)	<b>46</b>	<b>10.5</b>
		<b>16</b>	<b>3.6</b>

A descriptive analysis of the demographic profile of respondents is completed. Table 02 represents the information for the questionnaire. With data obtained for 63.2 percent of the gender, it appears that females outnumber males. The respondents' ages range from 16 - 25, 26 - 35, 26 - 45, 46 - 55, and 56 and up. The highest data collected for the age of the respondents are among 16-25 with 36.1%. Next, for the race of the respondents, the highest data collected are Malay with 96.6%. As for the highest education level of the respondents, the highest data collected are among Degree level with 40.7%. For the occupation of the respondents, the data collected the highest is among student and unemployed categories with 29.5%. Furthermore, for the household income of the respondents, the highest data collected are for B40 (RM4,360 and below) with 48.6%. For the place of origin, the highest data collected are for urban with 71.1%. Meanwhile, for the state, the highest data collected are for Central (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya) with 38.4%.

**Table 3.** The level of awareness on self-care through media

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Mean</b>
I believed that the media <b>could</b> influence the perception of people towards the importance of personal hygiene.	3.69
I comply with the steps for personal hygiene conveyed by the media	3.65
I always wear a mask when going out as proposed by the media.	3.65
I always sanitize my hands when going out as proposed by the media.	3.65
I will take Screening test as a precaution step if I have the symptoms of <b>COVID-19</b> .	3.52

I will take shower right after I get home before I spend time with my family.	3.45
I was affected emotionally with the information on <b>COVID-19</b> that was transmitted by the media.	3.34
I will wash the things that I bought as a precaution step during <b>COVID-19</b> .	3.10
I always wear gloves when going out as proposed by the media.	2.50
Overall	<b>3.40</b>

Table 03 shows the overall analysis of the awareness promoting self-care. The overall means is 3.40. The table managed to analyse the mean for every question for the level of awareness in promoting self-care during COVID-19 in the questionnaire. The highest means recorded in the table is 3.69 for the question "I believed that the media could influence the perception of people towards the importance of personal hygiene". According to Pan et al. (2019), the study shows that media is effective in promoting about personal hygiene where three different platforms are used which is Facebook, Email and Website, the results shows that Facebook gains more view than the other platforms.

## 6.2. Inferential statistics

**Regression.** In this segment, a Multiple Linear Regression analysis was executed to identify the predictor and its influence on the criterion. In other words, it is to discover the prediction of a single dependent continuous variable from a collection of independent variables.

\*If p-value < 0.05, thus, reject hypothesis.

### *Self-care*

**Table 4.** Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.591 <sup>a</sup>	.349	.346	.373
a. Predictors: (Constant), social media				

The R square (R<sup>2</sup>) is shown in Table 4. The number 349 denotes the sum of variation in the dependent variable as a result of all the independent variables being associated. As summation, 34.9% of variances in dependent variables which is Self-care could be explained by the independent variables. To be concluded, there are another 65.1% which can be explained by the other effectiveness besides social media.

**Table 5.** The regression between effectiveness of social media and awareness in promoting self-care.

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.253	.142		8.851	.000
	Socialmedia	.251	.033	.302	7.641	.000

a. Dependent Variable: selfcare

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is relationship between social media and self-care.**

Table 5 shows that the association between social media and self-care is statistically important ( $p = .000$ ).

**7. Conclusion**

This study is conducted on 440 respondents that are believed social media are effective in promoting self-care during COVID-19. The research goals are based around two research questions: 1) To study the level of awareness in self-care through media and 2) to determine the relationship between the effectiveness of social media and self-care during COVID-19.

The researcher found that the research questions in the study have been answered and the hypothesis is being accepted as it is significant. Particularly, H<sub>1</sub> proposes that there is a significant relationship between the effectiveness of social media and promoting self-care ( $r=.302$ ,  $p=.000$  which  $p < \alpha = 0.05$ ). It can be concluded that the social media platform is effective in giving information during COVID-19. Therefore, all agencies including the government need to actively use social media in promoting self-care.

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